What is Public Health?
Purpose of this Educational Resource

- To define public health and its core disciplines
- To explain the difference between public health and the clinical professions (medicine, dentistry, nursing, pharmacy, etc.)
- To explore career opportunities that exist in public health
- To explore the college majors needed to prepare for graduate studies in public health
What Do You Know About Public Health?

Pre-Test - Insert the letter for the answer that applies to each question.

A) clinical dietician  B) biostatistics  C) prevent injury  D) manage budgets and people  E) public health

1. Improving and protecting the health of the community, specific groups, or populations is ___

2. This core discipline allows you to predict the future direction of diseases and how they might impact the health of the community. ___

3. What is one way that public health workers improve and protect the health of communities, specific groups, or populations? ___

4. An example of a career in Nutrition ___

5. What kind of work can you do in Health Services Policy and Management? ___

6. Public health workers are concerned about the health of specific groups of people. T or F

7. An example of a clinical professional is a doctor. T or F

8. Eating and physical activity impact’s the public’s health. T or F
What is Public Health?

Improving and protecting the health of the

- community
- specific groups
- populations
How Do Public Health Professionals Improve and Protect the Health of Communities, Specific Groups, or Populations

According to the US Department of Health and Human Services, public health professionals:

- Prevent diseases
  - Such as - H1N1, Diabetes, HIV/AIDS, the flu, norovirus

- Protect against environmental hazards
  - Air, water, and land pollution
  - Such as the BP oil spill

- Prevent injuries by enforcing laws and regulations such as the mandatory use of seatbelts, helmets, and car seat
How Do Public Health Professionals Improve and Protect the Health of Communities, Specific Groups, or Populations?

Respond to disasters; lead and engage in recovery efforts
- Hurricane Katrina
- Hurricane Sandy
- Tsunamis and wildfires
- Tornadoes

Promote and encourage healthy behaviors such as...
- Increasing physical activity
- Increasing healthy eating
- Wearing seatbelts
- Do not text and drive
- Do not drink and drive

Ensure that quality health services and health professionals are available in
- neighborhoods
- communities
- cities
- states
- other countries
How Do Public Health Professionals and Clinical Professionals Differ?

Public Health Professionals

- Are concerned about the health of POPULATIONS and GROUPS (neighborhoods, cities, counties, states, a country, the world)
- Focus on PREVENTING illness, disease, and injury

Clinical Professionals

- Concerned about the health of ONE INDIVIDUAL
- Focus on providing care AFTER a person is ill or injured
Some Examples of Public Health and Clinical Professionals

Public Health Professionals

- Biostatisticians
- Epidemiologists
- Environmental Health Scientists
- Health Services & Policy Administrators
- Health Educators
- Food and Restaurant Inspectors
- Laboratory Professionals
- Nutritionist

Clinical Professionals

- Doctors
- Physician Assistants
- Nurses
- Physical Therapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Pharmacists
- Laboratory Professionals
What Kind of Work can I do in Public Health?
BIOSTATISTICS:
What Kind of Work Can I Do?

- Use math and science to determine the causes of diseases, injuries, and deaths
- Predict the future direction of diseases and how they might impact the health of community
BIOSTATISTICS:

Examples of careers

- Biostatistician
- Clinical Data Coordinator
- Clinical Research Associate
- Clinical Operations Specialist
- Project Manager
What college major should I consider to prepare for the profession?

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Computer Science
- Environmental Health Science
- Laboratory Sciences
- Mathematics
- Physics
- Statistics
What Kind of Work Can I Do?

- Study the impact of our surroundings on our health
- Examine what people might do through everyday activities to affect our surroundings at home, at work, and in our community
- Create and enforce rules and regulations that prevent dangers in our environment, such as the air we breathe, water we drink, and food we eat
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENCE:
Examples of careers

- Biologist
- Day Care Inspectors
- Drinking Water Program Specialist
- Environmental Engineer
- Environmental Health Inspectors *(for restaurants, swimming pools, salons, massage parlors)*
- Food, Drug, and Lodging Surveyor
- Industrial Hygienist
- Medical Facilities Inspector
- Microbiologist
- Public Health Chemist
Examples of careers

- Public Health Environmentalist
- Radioactive Material Specialist
- Safety and Occupational Health Manager
- Toxicologist
- Water Systems Inspector
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENCE:

What college major should I consider to prepare for the profession?

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Engineering
- Environmental Health Science
- Laboratory Sciences
- Nutrition and Food Management
- Math
- Pharmacy
- Physics
- Pre-Medicine
- Public Health
**Epidemiology:**

What Kind of Work Can I Do?

- Travel to various communities, locally, nationally, and internationally to investigate causes of outbreaks and disease among different groups of people and populations
- Determine who or what group of people is most likely to become exposed to certain diseases, injuries, or health conditions
- Develop and coordinate action plans to prevent and control disease, injuries, and other health conditions
- Study and research complex problems
Examples of careers

- Epidemiologist
- Epidemiology Manager
- Epidemiology Specialist
- Health Surveillance Program Administrator
- Public Health Epidemiologist
- Research Epidemiologist
- Senior Epidemiologist
What college major should I consider to prepare for the profession?

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Environmental Health Sciences
- Math
- Laboratory Sciences
- Physics
- Pre-medicine
- Public Health
What Kind of Work Can I Do?

- Teach and encourage people to make healthy lifestyle choices that will prevent disease and injury
- Organize physical activity programs that will improve the health of people or groups
- Develop community-wide education programs that encourage people to change unhealthy behaviors
  - Avoid smoking
  - Avoid drug and alcohol abuse,
  - Do not overeat
  - Do not under eat
HEALTH PROMOTION, EDUCATION, and BEHAVIOR:
What Kind of Work Can I Do?

- Develop communication, marketing, and educational materials that encourage healthy behaviors and lifestyles.
- Study and research complex health issues such as:
  - Juvenile diabetes
  - HIV/AIDS
  - Cancer
  - Obesity
- Evaluate health promotion and education programs which are designed to prevent disease and injury.
HEALTH PROMOTION, EDUCATION, and BEHAVIOR:

What Jobs Might Be Available?

- Community Health Educator
- Dietitian
- Disease Intervention Specialist
- Health Communications Consultant
- Health Education Teacher
- Health Policy Analyst
- Information Representative
- Maternal and Child Health Specialist
- Nutritionist
- Project Coordinator
- Recreation Director
- Rural Health Program Specialist
- Workplace Health Coordinator
- Health and Wellness
HEALTH PROMOTION, EDUCATION, and BEHAVIOR:

What College Major Should I Have?

- Public Health
- Health Education
- Marketing
- Nutrition
- Sociology
- Psychology
- English
- Physical Education
- Recreation
- Social and Behavioral Science
- Social Work
- Education
- Health Sciences
- English
- Nursing
HEALTH SERVICES, POLICY, and MANAGEMENT:
What Kind of Work Can I Do?

Health Services Policy and Management Professionals can:
- Manage budgets and people
- Create and enforce rules and regulations
- Manage databases for health departments, clinics, hospitals, and health insurance companies

Health Services Policy and Management Professionals make sure that the public can gain access to health care services.
HEALTH SERVICES, POLICY, and MANAGEMENT:

Examples of careers

- Assistant Vice President for Medical Education
- Child and Maternal Health Director
- District Health Director
- Chief Financial Officer
- Deputy Director for Operations
- Health Policy Advisor
- Chief Operations Officer
- Director of Geriatric Services
- Hospital Administrator
HEALTH SERVICES, POLICY, and MANAGEMENT:
Examples of careers

- Medical Practice Administrator
- Accountant
- Computer Science
- Finance
- Human Resources and Employee Relations
- Management
- Management Science and Information Systems
- Marketing
- Health Technology Officer
HEALTH SERVICES, POLICY, and MANAGEMENT:
What College Major Should I Have?

- Public Health
- Marketing
- Accounting
- Business Management
- Nursing
- Computer Science
- International Business
- Finance
- Human Resources
**NUTRITIONIST:**

**What Kind Work Can I Do?**

- Develop community-wide education programs that encourage healthy eating for a variety of age groups and people with specific health conditions
- Work with medical professionals to develop healthy diets for individuals receiving medical care

Develop communication campaigns and educational materials that encourage healthy eating such as:

- 5-a-Day
- Got Milk?
- Just ask for Whole Grains

Study complex nutrition issues
NUTRITIONIST:
Examples of careers

- Clinical Dietician
- Clinical Nutrition
- Dietitian
- Director of Nutrition Services
- Fitness and Nutrition Consultant
- Food Service Director
- Nutrition Analyst
- Nutritionist
- Nutrition Consultant
- Nutrition Navigator
- Pediatric Dietitian
- Recipe Analyst
NUTRITIONIST:
What College Major Should I Have?

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Communications
- Dietetics
- Public Health
- Exercise Science
- Family and Consumer Science
- Food Science
- Nutrition Science
- Recipe Developer
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:
What Work Can I Do?

- Create, implement, and evaluate programs to encourage increased physical activity
- Teach others how to include physical activity into their daily activities
- Study and conduct research focused on the relationships between physical activity and health
- Evaluate the impact of physical activity on an individual’s ability to lose and/or maintain a desired weight
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:
What Work Can I Do?

- Evaluate the impact of physical activity on an individual’s health to reduce, prevent, or eliminate diseases such as:
  - Obesity
  - Cardiovascular disease
  - Diabetes
  - Cancer

- Work with other professionals to promote physical activity among populations
Examples of careers

- Health Fitness Specialist
- Physical Activity Program Director
- Physical Activity Program Evaluator
- Physical Activity Consultant
- Physical Activity Epidemiologist
- Personal Trainer
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:
What College Majors Should I Have?

- Health Education
- Physical Education
- Exercise Science
- Laboratory Science
- Public Health
- Recreation
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Mathematics
- Physics
What Work Can I Do?

- Conduct research on health care needs and the use of health services by rural and minority groups.
- Develop rules and regulations designed to eliminate health care access issues for rural, poor, and minority populations to improve health conditions.
- Engage rural communities in program and activities that will encourage them to eat healthier and to become more physically active.
RURAL and MINORITY HEALTH: 
Examples of careers

• Rural Health Researcher
• Rural and Minority Health Consultant
• Rural and Minority Program Director
• Rural and Minority Health Program Evaluator
• Rural and Minority Health Consultant
• Rural and Minority Health Epidemiologist
RURAL and MINORITY HEALTH:
What College Majors Should I Have?

- Social Work
- Psychology
- Anthropology
- Sociology
- Public Health
- Health Sciences
- Family and Consumer Science
- Business Management
- Education
What have you learned about public health?

**Post-Test** - Insert the letter for the answer that applies to each question.

A) clinical dietician  B) biostatistics  C) prevent injury  
D) manage budgets and people  E) public health

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7. An example of a clinical professional is a doctor. T or F

8. Eating and physical activity impact’s the public’s health. T or F
Answers to the Pre and Post Test

A) clinical dietician  B) biostatistics  C) prevent injury
D) manage budgets and people  E) public health

1) Improving and protecting the health of the community, specific groups, or populations is: Public Health
2) This core discipline allows you to predict the future direction of diseases and how they might impact the health of the community. Biostatistics
3) What is one way that public health workers improve and protect the health of communities, specific groups, or populations? Prevent Injuries
4) An example of a career in Nutrition: Clinical Dietician
5) What kind of work can you do in Health Services Policy and Management? Manage Budgets and People
6) Public health workers are concerned about the health of specific groups of people. True
7) An example of a clinical professional is a doctor. True
8) Eating and physical activity impact’s the public’s health. True
Want to Learn More About Public Health?

For more information about public health careers, admission to accredited public health training programs, employment, as well as specific careers and roles of public health workers, check out this partial list of resources.

**Public Health Government Agencies**
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
- US Department of Health and Human Services: [www.hhs.gov](http://www.hhs.gov)
- National Institutes of Health: [www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov)
- National Institute for Minority Health and Health Disparities: [www.nih.gov/nimhd](http://www.nih.gov/nimhd)
- SC Department of Health and Environmental Control: [www.scdhec.gov](http://www.scdhec.gov)
- SC Department of Health and Human Services: [www.scdhhs.gov](http://www.scdhhs.gov)

**Admission to Accredited Public Health Training Programs**
- Association of Schools of Public Health: [www.asph.org](http://www.asph.org)
- Schools of Public Health Application Service (SOPHAS): [www.sophas.org](http://www.sophas.org)
- University of South Carolina Arnold School of Public Health: [www.sph.sc.edu](http://www.sph.sc.edu)
- The College Board: [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)
- The Graduate Record Exam: [www.ets.com](http://www.ets.com)
- The Graduate Management Admissions Test: [www.gmac.com](http://www.gmac.com)

**Professional Association that support the work of Public Health Workers and Public Health Training Programs**
- National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO): [www.naccho.org](http://www.naccho.org)
- American Public Health Association: [www.apha.org](http://www.apha.org)
- Partners in Information Access for the Public Health Workforce: [www.phpartners.org](http://www.phpartners.org)
What is **Public Health?**

**Student Development Programs**

**Institute for Partnerships to Eliminate Health Disparities**
220 Stoneridge Dr, Suite 103
Columbia, SC 29210
803-251-6303 or 803-251-6315
http://www.sph.sc.edu/health_disparities

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